

THE NEW COVENANT – PART 2

Jeremiah 31:33-34 ... “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know me....”

If you missed part 1 of this series, please go back and read it first. As we said in part 1, God made a covenant with his chosen people, the Jews, when he rescued them from Egypt. He only required them to worship and obey him to receive the immense blessings he had in store for them. But for thousands of years, the Jews disobeyed God over and over again. The new covenant is God’s second chance for the Jews (and for us, because we Gentiles are adopted into his chosen people when we accept Christ as our savior).

In Jeremiah’s prophecy about God’s new covenant with Israel, he quotes God as saying that his commandments will be infused into our minds and hearts, instead of only being inscribed on the stone tablets he gave Moses. Having knowledge in your mind, is much better than having to look it up on the Internet, or trying to find a book from which you can read it. That is God’s plan with your conscience; you are born with a basic knowledge of right and wrong, so that you can make right choices. But, as we have taught previously, our consciences are quickly re-programmed by people around us after birth.

Jeremiah’s also quotes God as saying that under the new covenant, God would no longer limit his contact with man to a few priests and prophets; every man would have an opportunity to have a personal – one on one – relationship with God; to speak to God directly and to hear his voice. About 700 years after Jeremiah made this prophecy, God fulfilled it by sending Jesus to introduce the new covenant. Jesus taught us how to pray to God, how to listen to God’s voice, and that our destiny is no longer in the hands of men – priests and pastors. We now can know him personally and intimately.

God’s new covenant with us has the same requirement as his first covenant: to love, worship and obey him. The advantages we have today, are that: Jesus fulfilled much of the original rules (10 commandments), the Holy Spirit abides in each of us to help guide us to obedience to God, and we have an advocate, Jesus, who sits at the right hand of God, interceding on our behalf to the Father.

We stated in part 1, that many pastors ignore much of the Old Testament because they feel it has no importance to us today. Can you see the importance now? The prophecies of Jeremiah (and other prophets) not only tie the Old and New Testaments together to give us a full picture of how God operates, but the prophecies are evidence of God’s fulfilled promises. When we see God doing exactly what he said he would do, hundreds or thousands of years before he did it, our faith is energized; we really have no excuse for not believing in God, and believing what he says.

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